



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

For immediate release: May 9, 2005 (05-20)
Contact: Joel Kangiser (360) 902-2013
Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
Visit our Web site at: agr.wa.gov

Okanogan, Grant and Chelan county incidents Agriculture Department takes enforcement actions on pesticide violations

OLYMPIA – During the first quarter of 2005, the state Department of Agriculture (WSDA) issued fines totaling \$1,550 against three individuals for violating state pesticide laws and rules. Two of the individuals had their licenses suspended for seven days each. Additionally, one company agreed to invest in spray-drift reduction equipment in lieu of paying a \$1,600 fine.

Fines ranged from \$450 to \$650 for violations that included making pesticide applications without a proper license, not following pesticide label directions, and other drift-related violations.

Actions taken were:

Phillip Dart, Oroville. WSDA alleged that Dart applied a state restricted-use herbicide without a license, and that the application drifted onto an adjacent organic orchard, damaging numerous trees. The matter was resolved when Dart agreed to pay \$650.

Arland Hansen, president of East High Flying Service, Warden, paid a \$450 fine and his commercial applicator license was suspended for seven days. In July 2004, Hansen applied an insecticide by plane to a potato field in Grant County. The insecticide drifted onto a nearby alfalfa seed crop where there were 32 shelters of leaf cutter bees used for pollinating the crop. Large numbers of bees were killed. Additionally, the grower claims to have lost an estimated \$42,000 in yield from reduced pollination.

Michael Moore, public operator for Quincy Columbia Basin Irrigation District, Blythe, paid a \$450 fine and had his license suspended for seven days. In July of 2004, Moore applied a mix of herbicides to irrigation district roadsides. The application drifted to an adjacent potato field, damaging the crop.

Duane Peart and Stemilt Management, Inc., pesticide handler employers, Wenatchee. WSDA alleged that in June 2004, employees of Peart and Stemilt Management, Inc., misapplied pesticides to an orchard with airblast sprayers. The spray drifted across a highway and a number of vehicles drove through the drift. The matter was resolved when Peart and Stemilt Management agreed to install a deflector on their airblast sprayer in lieu of paying a \$1,600 fine. The deflector reduces the upward plume of the sprayer so that the spray is directed more toward the fruit trees.

Penalty matrix used by WSDA to levy fines and suspensions

A penalty matrix is used to ensure penalties are fairly applied. The matrix takes into account the seriousness of the violation, whether it is a first or a repeat offense, and whether there are aggravating or mitigating factors involved. Larger penalties often reflect repeat offenses or multiple violations within the same incident.

MORE

WSDA takes enforcement actions on pesticide violations
May 9, 2005

WSDA enforces state and federal laws to protect people, property and the environment against the improper use of pesticides. Staff also provides technical assistance to the pesticide industry and consumers, and enforces rules on structural inspections for wood destroying organisms, such as carpenter ants, termites, or wood rot. More than 200 allegations of improper distribution or misuse of pesticides, or faulty building inspections are investigated each year.

To file a complaint involving the misuse of a pesticide, or to find out if a pesticide applicator or structural pest inspector is licensed, call (877) 301-4555.

###